

FOOTWEAR VARIABLE TENSION LACING SYSTEMS**ABSTRACT**

5 Variable tension footwear lacing systems and methods permit and facilitate adjustment of
selected zones by a user. In an embodiment, stop devices are used with a footwear lacing system
to prevent opposing closure edges of a footwear article from advancing towards each other. The
stop device includes a stop guide configured for fastening to a portion of the footwear article,
and a stop element. In an implementation, the stop element includes a stop head and a releasable
10 affixing member. The stop head is configured to be manipulated by a user to releasably secure
the affixing member to a selected position across the length of the stop guide. The stop head is
operable to contact a first closure edge of the footwear article. In an embodiment, during use
first and second stop devices contact first and second opposing closure edges of the footwear
article and prevent them from advancing towards each other.

15